REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 27, 31 and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). In this regard, the Examiner contends in the April 8, 2005 Office Action that such claims are anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,996,003 to Namikata et al. (hereafter Namikata). The Examiner has also rejected Claims 4-6, 9, 28-30, 32 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) contending that Claims 5, 6, and 28-30 are obvious based on Namikata in view of in view of United States Patent No. 6,317,777 to Skarbo et al. (hereafter Skarbo), that Claims 4 and 32 are obvious based on Namikata in view of United States Patent No. 6,463,460 to Simonoff, and that Claims 9 and 34 are obvious based on Namikata in view of United States Patent No. 6,430,556 to Goldberg et al. (hereafter Goldberg). Claims 5 and 28 also stand rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. In this regard, Applicant respectfully submits that such rejection of Claims 5 and 28 is obviated by the amendments made thereto and respectfully submits that Claims 5 and 28 are in condition for allowance. Regarding the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's contentions and respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 27 as amended herein and all claims depending directly or indirectly therefrom are in condition for allowance.

Independent Claims 1 and 27 are directed to computer implemented collaboration systems that allow for single-user and multi-user collaboration wherein information from one or more data sources are extended in a general, shareable, updateable and synchronizable manner. The information and extended properties associated therewith are provided in a fully self-describing manner such that any client tool is capable of interpreting them. Further, the collaboration systems of Claims 1 and 27 permit different sets and values of extended properties to be provided based on a user's problem space (conference), as well as allowing sharing, updating and synchronization to apply both to multiple views of the information by a single user and multiple views of the information by multiple users.

More specifically, the computer implemented collaboration system of independent Claim 1 includes a data management tier, a repository tier, a user interface tier, and a services tier. The data management tier includes at least one data source. The repository tier includes at least one repository server that is associated with the data source and is enabled for accessing data items within the data source using access methods native to the data source to create a document

including data items from the data source that is associable with at least one conference accessible to a plurality of participants. The user interface tier includes at least one client tool that is enabled for displaying the data items within the data source in client tool interfaces on at least one user terminal connectable with the computer implemented collaboration system. The services tier includes at least one data channel server that is associated with the document. The data channel server is created when the document is associated with the conference and provides an interface between the repository server and the client tool. The collaboration system further includes at least one extended property that is associated with each data item in the data source. The extended property is maintained within the data channel server and is available for display by the client tool only within the conference with which the document is associated. The client tool is enabled to change the extended property associated with each data item, and changes made to the extended property associated with each data item in one of the client tool interfaces are reflected in the other client tool interfaces by changing an instance of the extended property in the conference with which the document is associated.

The computer implemented collaboration system of independent Claim 27 includes at least one repository server, at least one document server, at least one client tool and at least one data channel server. The repository server is associated with at least one data source and is enabled for accessing data items within the data source using access methods native to the data source. The document server provides at least one interface for creating a plurality of documents, with each document representing selected data items within the data source and being associable with at least one conference. The client tool is enabled for displaying the data items represented by each document in client tool interfaces displayable on at least one user terminal connectable with the computer implemented collaboration system. The data channel server provides an interface between the repository server and the client tool and is created upon association of a document with a conference. The data channel server is further enabled for maintaining an instance of at least one extended property associated with each data item represented in a document, with the extended properties being available for display by the client tool only within a conference with which a particular document is associated. The client tool is enabled to change the extended property associated with each data item, and changes made to the extended property associated with each data item in one of the client tool interfaces are reflected in the other client tool interfaces by changing the instance of the extended property in the conference with which

the document is associated.

Collaboration systems in accordance with the limitations of Claims 1 and 27 provide for the creation of documents that represent selected data items from data sources via associated repository servers that employ access methods native to the data sources. By associating the documents with a conference, participants can collaboratively access and manipulate data from multiple data sources at the same time to solve a common problem. In this regard, extended properties associated with the data items included in the documents are maintained within a data channel server separate from the repository server that accesses the data items from the data sources. Maintaining the extended properties within the data channel server separate from the repository server provides the advantage of allowing for single user and multi-user collaboration without requiring that client tools be enabled for direct communication with one another or even have any knowledge of each other. Furthermore, extended properties are only displayed by the client tool within the conference with which a document is associated. Additionally, when changes are made to an extended property in one client tool interface, such changes are also displayed in other client tool interfaces.

In contrast to the collaboration systems of Claims 1 and 27, Namikata is directed to a common document display apparatus and desktop conferencing system that imitates the distribution and explanation of conference documents in an actual conference so that conferences held in the video conferencing system approximate the actual conference. (See e.g., Namikata, Col. 1, lines 62-67). Namikata describes a desktop conferencing system in which conference participants can select documents from a list of documents for display in a two-layered document display area 53 having a document display layer 66 for displaying the conference document and draw layer 67 for displaying drawings made by the user with a pointer 54. (See e.g., Namikata, Col. 5, lines 26-40, FIGS. 5A-5D, and Col. 7, line 66 through Col. 8, line 17). Thus, the function of the two-layered document display area 53 depicted in FIG. 5D of Namikata is to display conference documents and drawings made by a participant. This is not the same as the functionality provided by the data channel server in Applicant's invention. Also, there is no mention in Namikata that the two-layered document display area 53 is created upon association of a document with a conference as is the case with Applicant's data channel server.

Furthermore, Namikata specifically states: "the contents of the drawing to be made on the draw layer 67 is preserved by only the common document display process 42 in one computer of

each participant, and never shared by the other participants in the conference. Accordingly, each participant can freely take a personal memo in the document currently displayed in the conference." (See Namikata, Col. 8, lines18-24). Thus, Namikata specifically teaches away from the type of collaboration enabled by Applicant's invention in which multiple participants are able to access and manipulate data from one or more data sources at the same time to solve a problem. In this regard, Namikata does not disclose that instances of the extended properties (e.g., the visualization and control properties) are maintained by the data channel server that is created when a document is associated with a conference, and when changes are made in one client tool interface to an extended property, these changes are reflected in the other client tool interfaces.

Given the noted deficiencies in Namikata, Applicant's invention as claimed in Claims 1 and 27 is not anticipated by Namikata nor could Namikata be modified or combined with other cited references to achieve Applicant's invention as set forth in Claims 1 and 27. Since, as discussed above, independent Claims 1 and 27 are in condition for allowance, there is no need to separately address the patentability of the claims depending directly or indirectly therefrom. In this regard, Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

MARSH FISCHMANN & BREYFOGLE LLP

By: Robert B. Berube

Robert B. Berube
Registration No. 39,608
3151 South Vaughn Way, Suite 411
Aurora, Colorado 80014
Telephone: (303) 338-0997
Facsimile: (303) 338-1514

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